

QUARTERLY PERISCOPE.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

ANATOMY.

1. *On the Vascular Appearance of the Human Stomach, which is frequently mistaken for Inflammation of that Organ.* By JOHN YELLOWLY, M. D.—In our original department we have given the result of some inquiries relative to the mucous membrane of the stomach. A notice of a paper on the same subject, published in the fourth volume of the Medico-chirurgical Transactions, by Dr. Yellowly, will probably not be uninteresting here. This paper is a sound and plausible one in most respects, and exhibits such good talents for observation, that in this country, at least, it has on all discussions respecting the pathology of the stomach, been brought forward as proving the non-existence of inflammation in certain diseases. The reflections at the conclusion of his paper are evidently those of a mind not far from the truth, but which had been kept undetermined and in equipoise, perhaps, by the comparative novelty of the subject, at the period when he made his observations.

Notwithstanding the general merit of his paper, the tabular view of twenty dissections is very unsatisfactory in not giving, with but few exceptions, the duration of the diseases under which the patients perished, the medicines which they took just before death, nor the quantity of contents in the stomach, all of which influence somewhat its appearance. Neither has he stated, with sufficient accuracy, the number of hours which intervened between the death and the examination of the individuals. I mention these as objections to the plan of the paper, and if we also inquire particularly into each dissection, it will be observed that there is scarcely a case which would be set down to gastric inflammation, according to the rules we have inculcated. It is true that there is redness and vascularity in all the stomachs, but none of them presented the red, blotched, and motley appearance of genuine acute inflammation of the mucous membrane; on the contrary, the blood seems to have been arrested in the capillary vessels instead of being extravasated. The only cases where extravasation is spoken of are exactly those where we would expect to find it, to wit: No. 1, apoplexy, No. 2—3, traumatic irritation, and No. 19, protracted fever with irritability of stomach.

Mr. Yellowly next gives the dissection of five criminals who were executed by hanging; as the fact is generally conceded, and has been pointed out by Bichat and others, that this mode of death produces a great accumulation of blood in the capillaries throughout the whole system, we find in Mr. Yellowly's cases a correspondence with our previous knowledge on the subject. Cases 1st and 3d, seem to have presented the red blotches so remarkable in yellow fever, and others of high gastric irritation. English criminals, we understand, are much in the habit of copious potations of alcoholic drinks just before they are executed, it would have been more satisfactory if Mr. Y. had inquired on this subject, and reported accordingly. Mucous membranes, however, when

congested by any cause, either mechanical or otherwise, bleed so readily, that strangulation alone might have produced the appearance. Case 2d was examined at so remote a time from death, to wit: seventy-two hours, and presented the stomach so completely dyed by infiltration, that no rigid deduction can be drawn from it, either one way or the other. Cases 4th and 5th do not present peculiarities leading to any very distinct conclusion.

Fig. 1, and fig. 4, of Mr. Yellowly's plate, I should unhesitatingly set down to acute inflammation, were similar appearances met with in a dissection. Fig. 2, and fig. 3, are equivocal, they may or may not belong to inflammation, they resemble, however, very much the stomachs of old drunkards.

Mr. Yellowly does not seem to be apprized of the fact that the extreme redness of acute inflammation of the stomach does not last for much more than six or eight days, and that it afterwards disappears to a very great degree, indeed sometimes almost entirely, leaving only a dark yellowish, motley tinge, with softening, or even a total removal of the mucous coat.

Mr. Yellowly expresses his conviction that the thinness of the stomach at its greater end, so frequently met with, is not a diseased state, but a natural one, he therefore rejects the testimony of Mr. Hunter, and others, on this subject, and is disposed to refer it to mistake. But though the left extremity of the stomach is not so thick as the right, yet the following simple experiment will enable any one to detect a removal of the mucous coat. Let the suspected part be floated for a few minutes in water, in which case the edge of the erosion will become as distinct as the edge of an ulcer on the skin, under common circumstances. Again, in those cases of erosion, so far from the blood-vessels not being injured, they are so much so that a wax injection may be freely pushed through them into the cavity of the stomach, an example of this is now preserved in the anatomical cabinet of the University.

Mr. Yellowly, in detailing the experiment on the dog, (p. 416,) poisoned by corrosive sublimate, says that there were dark coloured "patches" of coagulated blood in the villous coat of its stomach, "very similar to that which is sometimes found in an inflamed serous membrane, on which coagulating lymph had been very recently deposited."* He has here made a very accurate and judicious observation, which, if it had been applied as a test to his other dissections, would have dispelled most of his doubts and errors. For the patches of red blood in an acutely inflamed stomach, bear the strongest resemblance to the patches of red blood found in the substance of the factitious membrane of a recently inflamed pleura, and seem to disappear by the same process, absorption.

W. E. H.

2. *TIEDEMANN on the Membrana Pupillaris*.—"Dr. JACOB has proved that this membrane does not disappear towards the seventh month of fetal life, but that in most cases it exists at birth. Towards the seventh month it loses its blood-vessels, becomes perfectly transparent, and gradually diminishes till it is entirely absorbed a short time after birth. From eight to fifteen days from birth slight traces of this membrane may be discovered. Dr. Jacob once succeeded in injecting the membrana pupillaris in a fetus nearly at its full time. M. Tiedemann has repeated the experiments of Dr. Jacob, and confirmed their accuracy. He has injected the membrane in a fetus which died during labour; it exhibited an extremely delicate network of vessels, well filled with injection, as also were the vessels of the iris. The injection was composed of isinglass and cinnabar."—*Bulletin des Sciences Méd., April, from Zeitschrift für Physiologie*.

3. *Account of a Remarkable Production resembling a Tail*. By ARTHUR JACOBS, M. D.—This very curious production was observed in a young man, it had ex-

* Mr. Y. has made a little mistake about the position of these patches, they are not in the inflamed natural pleura, but in the factitious membrane of coagulating lymph. Just opposite to them are found in the pleura, the red points of the vessels through which the extravasation occurred, they look like those on the dura mater, when the skull-cap is first torn up.

isted from birth, was about the size of the closed hand of a large man, and was situated upon the lower part of the sacrum. Upon its most convex part was an orifice, through which the finger could be introduced and passed round an irregular resisting body, which partly projected through this opening. This extraordinary production adhered firmly by one extremity to the spine, the connexion was osseous, but so spongy as readily to yield to the knife. It was extirpated by Mr. Jacobs, Senr. and on examination it was found to be furnished throughout with a bony core, or centre, consisting of separate pieces, distinctly joined to each other with perfect synovial capsules. Mr. Jacobs adds, that he "has been assured by a person of veracity, who states the fact from actual observation, that he knows an individual who has a production, or continuation of the os coccygis, which can be felt through the clothes, and causes inconvenience when the person sits; and that it is generally believed that several members of the same family have a similar appendage."—*Dublin Hospital Reports*, Vol. IV.

4. *Anatomical and Physiological considerations on the connexion of the Placenta with the Uterus, on the Vascular Communications between the two Organs, and the Mode of Circulation of the Fluids.*—M. LAUTH, Jr. thinks that although anatomists and physiologists have paid much attention to the mode of union of the uterus and placenta, and the reciprocal exchange of blood between the mother and fœtus, they have not given us clear views of the structure of these parts, nor of the manner in which they perform their peculiar functions. The author's experiments lead him to deny, that the uterine placenta really exists under the form which has been assigned to it. He has been able to inject by means of very fine tubes two different orders of vessels, visible in the membrana decidua. The one runs from this membrane to the placental vessels, and the other from the placenta to the vessels of the membrana decidua, all which appertain to those of the placenta. These vessels are the lymphatics, of which the former separate from the blood of the mother, the materials necessary for the fœtus, and the second draw from the blood of the fœtus the matters which ought to be separated from it. Finally, according to the author, the placenta appears to perform in the fœtus, the functions which are subsequently performed by the intestinal canal, rather than those of the lungs, which is attributed to it at present. M. Breschet, in a note at the end of this memoir, informs us, that recent microscopic observations, go to show that the globules of blood of the mother do not resemble the globules of blood of the fœtus.—*Journal des Progrès, from the Rép. Gén. d'anatomie et de physiologie pathologiques.*

PHYSIOLOGY.

5. *Anomaly.*—M. LEVRAT, Senr. reported to the Medical Society of Lyons, the case of a woman, who, after having given birth three times to twins, a male and a female each time, was delivered at the fourth and a half month of pregnancy, of a male child, and milk was secreted in the right breast only; four months afterwards she was delivered of a perfect female infant, and at this period milk was secreted in the left breast alone.—*Annales de la Méd. Phys.* April, 1827, from the *Compte rendu des trav. de la Soc. de Méd. de Lyons.* Par J. M. Pichard, D. M.

6. *Periodical Dumbness.*—"M. ITARD informs the Royal Academy of Medicine, that he had seen a female who is dumb at each menstrual period; this he attributes, justly, to a cerebral congestion taking place at these epochs."—*Annales de la Méd. Phys.* Feb. 1827.